



NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC FORUM

INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL STRATEGIC STUDIES

A Presidential Decision Directive

Multilateral Peace Operations

20011005 224

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Workshop Conclusions

- A recent presidential decision directive contains criteria for peace operations that, if strictly applied, could result in decisions to avoid U.S. participation in nearly all military operations.
- There is a danger that the failed Somalia mission will inhibit U.S. efforts to play constructive roles in UN peace operations.
- There is a need to establish formal and ongoing consultative procedures with Congress -- possibly involving a senior consultative group -- to assure Congressional involvement prior to U.S. engagement in peace operations.
- The Directive downplays the important policy area of remedial steps for effective humanitarian assistance programs.
- Efforts to strengthen UN peacekeeping capabilities may be hampered if current UN management procedures are not reformed.

Specific Issues

During the Cold War, the United Nations could resort to multilateral peace operations only in the rare circumstance in which the interests of the Soviet Union and the West did not conflict. By 1989, both the United States and the Soviet Union perceived that such operations could serve as cost-effective tools in preventing, containing, or solving conflicts that threatened international peace and stability. In many instances, they would benefit from having to bear only a share of the burden. However, since 1989, territorial disputes, armed ethnic conflicts, civil wars, and total collapse of governmental authority in failed states have presented ongoing challenges to the institutional, financial, and operational capabilities of the UN system. The UN is currently involved in about 20 peacekeeping operations.

In 1993, President Clinton initiated a wide ranging review of factors to be considered in supporting UN peacekeeping and peace enforcement resolutions, including circumstances under which American forces will be provided and the issue of command authority over these forces. The extended review—which required negotiation of division of responsibility between State and DOD, resolution of command-and-control questions, and consultation with Members of Congress—was completed by Spring

1994 and approved by the President early in May. The PDD, which was little changed from the original during the review process, establishes guidelines and criteria in addressing the full range of UN activities from preventive diplomacy through traditional peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding. It stipulates guidelines for committing U.S. forces. (See the chart below.) U.S. participation in UN peace operations is not to substitute for U.S. capacity to fight and win its own war; support for UN peace operations should not degrade overall U.S. military preparedness to meet threats directed toward itself and its allies.

The guidelines in the PDD provide a policy framework for deliberations on U.S. participation in multilateral peace operations. They also offer proposals to strengthen UN Headquarters performance, overcome system overload, ameliorate problems in field operations, and improve financial planning. However, participants in the INSS-SIPA workshop concluded that four issues require greater attention if the PDD is to be implemented with coherence and consistency:

- Application of peace operations criteria in an unstable security environment.
- Balancing U.S. military requirements under terms of the 1993 "Bottom Up Review" against increasing demands to conduct peace operations.
- Reconciliation of bureaucratic issues.
- Establishment of a more effective consultation arrangement with the Congressional leadership.

The following sections address these four issues.

U.S. Peace Operations Policy Guidance

- **Factors for Supporting Peace Operations**
 - Multilateral involvement advances U.S. interests.
 - International interest in dealing with problem multilaterally.
 - Conflict represents threat to or break of international peace and security.
 - Operation has clear objectives.
 - For traditional peacekeeping operation, ceasefire is in place.
 - For peace enforcement operation, significant threat to international peace and security.
 - Forces, financing, and appropriate mandate are available.
 - Inaction judged to result in unacceptable political, humanitarian, and economic consequences.
 - Operation's duration is tied to clear objectives and realistic criteria.
- **Factors for Participating in Peace Operations.**
 - Participating advances U.S. interests.
 - Risks to American personnel considered acceptable.
 - Personnel, funds, and other resources are available.
 - U.S. participation deemed necessary for operation's success.
 - Role of U.S. forces tied to clear objectives.
 - Endpoint of U.S. participation can be identified.
 - U.S. public and U.S. Congress support operation.
 - Command and Control arrangements are acceptable.
- **Factors for Participating When Operation is Likely to Involve Combat**
 - Clear determination to commit sufficient forces to achieve clearly defined objectives.

- Plan to achieve objectives decisively.
- Commitment to reassess or adjust size, composition, and disposition of forces if necessary.

Threatening Security Environments

While the U.S. Government has pledged to support the full range of peace support activities -- given that requisite criteria are met -- ambiguity surrounds when and where American forces will be injected into unstable security environments. Conflict situations that appear to fall into traditional peacekeeping roles and missions (Chapter VI of the Charter), including ceasefires and truce negotiations, could deteriorate rapidly and lethally in civil war situations wherein contending forces harbor ancient rivalries or modern day animosities. Somalia and Bosnia are contemporary examples. Because the United Nations hasn't developed coherent conceptual foundations to deal with unsettled situations, recent crises represent opportunities lost for the organization's leadership. The Rwanda debacle is becoming the rule rather than the exception, with the center of gravity for policy shifting to concerned member states and subregional groupings. The PDD provides little clear indication of where the U.S. Government is likely to stand on this question. Several workshop participants suggested that the United States has begun to evince peacekeeping paralysis because of the failed Somalia mission.

The Balancing of Ends and Means

Discussions at the workshop reflected concern about the scale and scope of U.S. post-Cold War security commitments. The initial posture of the Clinton Administration was to view the UN role in peace operations as a road to multilateral burdensharing. However, escalating UN involvement in peace missions since 1989 has generated a degree of "sticker shock" within the U.S. Government. The missions and roles assigned to American forces to meet global commitments under downsizing and budgetary constraints now appear at odds with peacekeeping imperatives.

As one participant noted, for every U.S. soldier involved in peacekeeping operations, the U.S. military must retain two additional soldiers in its training and rotational base to support that soldier forward. A deployment of 25,000 troops to Bosnia therefore would tie down nearly 75,000 U.S. troops. With crises crystallizing on the Korean Peninsula and in Haiti, together with ongoing commitment of resources to Europe and the Persian Gulf, the strains on manpower could become an issue—one that the PDD could not be expected to address.

Reconciling Bureaucratic Issues

The policy directive creates a "shared responsibility" approach to managing and funding UN peace operations within the U.S. Government. The Department of Defense is to take lead responsibility for operations that involve U.S. combat units and those that are likely to involve combat, whether or not U.S. troops are involved. The State Department will retain lead responsibility for operations that do not involve U.S. combat units. This division of labor created considerable delay in producing the PDD.

Two bureaucratic issues raised by critics of the PDD were the question of earmarked or standby forces, and the extent to which additional indoctrination or training on the part of U.S. forces is required. Several military representatives strongly opposed the concept of earmarked forces and believed some limited peacekeeping training is necessary to supplement regular combat training for U.S. military forces.

The PDD is relatively silent on the issue of "muscular involvement" in humanitarian assistance and other aspects of UN peacekeeping. The Directive appears to signal, through organizational assignment, an indirect approach. The Agency for International Development has the lead assignment for early warning and preventive actions in Sudan, Ethiopia, and Uganda rather than for the full range of likely contingencies.

Congressional Linkages

A strong case was made for Congressional consultation when contemplating U.S. involvement in multilateral peace operations, with several participants recommending formation of a "Senior Standing Consultative Group." Reservation was expressed, however, over the capacity of the Congressional leadership to sustain support for "risky" operations or to overcome a tendency to second-guess Administration initiatives.

Nevertheless, the active involvement of the Legislative Branch in reviewing the PDD in draft form has signalled the intention of the Clinton Administration to give due consideration to Congressional advice and consent where peace operations are under consideration.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the workshop, several policy recommendations might be suggested:

- Improve coordination and planning by detailing more military representatives to USUN and to UN Headquarters.
- Begin in-depth review of ways to strengthen the peace operation potentials of regional organizations, including "Partnership for Peace" roles for East Europeans.
- Develop joint task force training packages to prepare senior U.S. military to integrate Third World participants in non-traditional peace operations.
- Formulate clearer policy guidelines on the U.S. view of "muscular intervention" and "peace-enforcement" for discussion with UN leadership.
- Analyze the concept of special logistics support packages to enhance peacekeeping operations of regional organizations (e.g., Africa's Organization of African Unity).
- Make explicit the trade-offs between the Two Major-Regional-Contingencies strategy and expanded U.S. peacekeeping roles.

INTERNET DOCUMENT INFORMATION FORM

A . Report Title: A Presidential Decision Directive Multilateral Peace Operations

B. DATE Report Downloaded From the Internet: 10/03/01

C. Report's Point of Contact: (Name, Organization, Address, Office Symbol, & Ph #): National Defense University Press
Institute for National Strategic Studies
Washington, DC 20001

D. Currently Applicable Classification Level: Unclassified

E. Distribution Statement A: Approved for Public Release

F. The foregoing information was compiled and provided by:
DTIC-OCA, Initials: VM **Preparation Date** 10/03/01

The foregoing information should exactly correspond to the Title, Report Number, and the Date on the accompanying report document. If there are mismatches, or other questions, contact the above OCA Representative for resolution.